

"LOVE WILL FIND A WAY"

by  
Emma Scott Basmith.

SCENE I -

Twilight in Mrs. Hawthorne's living room, simply furnished - on the right is a couch before the fire, a small table and footstool in front of couch - behind couch a wood box, oval centre table with a chair behind and at the left side settee at extreme left against the wall. Right hand door opens into kitchen. Left hand door opens into hall leading outside. Long lattice window between the doors has dainty chintz curtains with flowering bulbs the entire length of the window - on either side of this window. A chair between the window and the door. The colors of mauve and gray predominate. Mrs. Hawthorne, a dainty fragile old lady over seventy is seated before the fire - She is dressed in a quaint flowered silk with rare old lace at her throat and wrists. She seems to be listening to someone speaking.

Mrs. Hawthorne: "Come in, William, (an old negro enters with his cap in his hands, taking an egg out of his cap he holds it up to the light)

William: "Look Mrs. Hawthorne, dat's de old spec's egg. She's got busy again, (puts on his spectacles and examines it closely) Yes, that's her egg. Looks to me as if three more of them is earning their board and keep, and keepin' down de high cost of living. Look at dem beauties (lays eggs in Mrs. Hawthorne's lap) Yes and I sez to myself - 'Mrs. Hawthorne will be glad to know dat Daisy's got her calf for sure's you live when I goes into de barn this mornin' there's de finest little red heifer snuggled up close to Daisy's side and things is lookin' up."

(Susie enters with a tea tray and places it on the little table in front of Mrs. Hawthorne and elevating her eyebrows at William)

Susie: "William, yo' better be lockin' down instead of up see yo' feet coming here bothering de mistress with yo' barn talk." (She gathers up de eggs and flounced out of de room)

Mrs. Hawthorne: "Hush, Susie. - William, you give Daisy de warm stall and don't forget de bedding."

William: "So, ma'am, I left her snug as a bug last night and she is very comfortable now."

Mrs. Hawthorne: "William, you do not forget dat Miss Constance comes home to-night for her holidays. She is bringing two of her school friends from de city. Take de double cutter and de big bear's robe when you go to de Depot to meet dem."

William: "I've got dem all ready, Miss Hawthorne, I've goin' to give dem city folks de drive of deir young lives around



- William - (continued) "by the old mill " (He goes out humming-  
'Den my little soul's goin' to shine, shine, Den my  
little soul's goin' to shine.)
- Mrs. Hawthorne,- (Pours out her tea, sips at all the while apparently  
listening to someone talking to her) "Yes, darling, I hear  
you calling to me. What is wrong, tell your mother, she is  
listening." (William enters with an armful) "William,  
did you see Priscilla coming down the road as you came in?  
I am expecting a letter to-night."
- William,- "No! she's not coming yet, Miss Hawthorne. Is yo' worried  
about anything?"
- Mrs. Hawthorne,- "Yes! William, I seem to hear someone calling to me  
all day."
- William, - "Well now dat's strange Mis' Hawthorne but I seems to feel  
like dat myself. I does too but I specks it is cause we  
is all excited over Miss Constance coming home. Yo' know  
I get powerful lonely for dat little lady since she went  
away to school. I spose it's because I knowed her mother  
afore her and then helpin' to raise the po' little thing  
after Mis' Henrietta died. I often think - - - but I had  
better be gettin' on with my work instead of thinkin' or  
I'll be late for dat train. Such wood, I sutinly am ashamed  
of it but the whole wood-pile is higgedy-piggledy since  
that white nigger Johnson came feelin' with our pile.  
I'll break every bone in his body if he comes feelin'  
around dis place again."
- Susie,- (Putting her head inside the door) "What's dat you say  
about Mr. Johnson? Yo' is goin' to be late for dat train.  
I heard it whistle at the cross-road."
- Mrs. Hawthorne,- "Never worry about the wood, William, go and open the door  
for Priscilla and see if she has any mail."
- Priscilla, - (Comes in apprehensively. She has a telegram in her hand  
which she hides in her muff when Mrs. Hawthorne turns  
around.) "How are you, Auntie?"
- Mrs. Hawthorne,- "Did you get any mail at the Post Office, Priscilla?"
- Priscilla, - "No, Auntie, were you expecting any particular letter?"
- Mrs. Hawthorne,- "I have been thinking all day that we should get some news  
from the northland. All day I have been getting messages  
from there."
- Priscilla, - "I met Mrs. Buchanan at the Post Office and she wants  
Constance and her friends to go over there for supper.  
Jennie and Kenneth Craig want to come and take them  
tobogganing right after they have had their tea and with  
your permission they will all go to the Buchanan's for  
supper."



Mrs. Hawthorne,- "That would be very nice. I wonder if those children have brought warm enough clothes to go tobogganing. Priscilla? You better go upstairs and look in the big chest in the closet of Constance's room. There you will find sweaters, mittens, moccasins and stockings."

"Wait till you have a cup of tea"(rings bell, Susie comes in)

"Susie, the young ladies will be along in a few moments, make some fresh tea when they come and get your muffins ready. We will not use the big dining room to-night. The children are invited out to supper so we will have ours here as usual."

(Priscilla is standing behind Mrs. Hawthorne with the telegram open in her hand. She is about to hand it to her when sleigh bells are heard outside, the door is flung open and Constance and her friends come in the room. Constance throwing her arms around her grandmother exclaims,- "Home at last - Grandmother, darling, here we are! How girls did you ever see anything sweeter than my granny. Oh! excuse me, grandmother, this is Margaret - Margaret Pentecost and this is Mureen Robertson and girls this is my precious Grandmother and has been besides both father and mother to me. Hullo, Cousin Priscilla! "

Mrs. Hawthorne,- "You are both very welcome to our old-fashioned country home. I hope you will both enjoy yourselves. Constance's friends are all waiting to give you a good time and you will have it too if you are fond of skating and tobogganing and winter sports. Constance come here! Take off your hat! (William take their things) Where are your braids?

Constance,- "They are there, Grandmother, dear, covered up with fluff, because of dear you, they are still safely bound around my head, pretty good camouflage is it not? Be thankful Granny dear, they are not cut off and my hair bobbed like Mureen's for that is the prevailing epidemic in the city now."

"The memory of you saved my hair as it has saved me from a hundred foolish feds - Here's William covered with bundles. Grandmother, he was the most dignified old butler you ever saw down at the station, hardly spoke to me at all. Come here, William! Come and be properly introduced to those young ladies. Girls this is our William and he's the best old soul. He helped to raise me didn't he Grandmother. He carried me and my bundles around all his life."

William,- (Laughing) "Ho! Miss Constance, not all of my life but all of yo' life. How do do, Miss! I'see mighty glad to see you. Bof youse might welcome here and I'see glad to make yo' acquaintance. I'see sure you are bof ladies or you wouldn't be here ( with a profound bow to each.)

Susie - (With the tea tray.)



Constance,-

"Here's Susie. What you got inside that suffin dish? I bet a million dollars them corn muffins an potato cakes."

Susie,-

"Yo' wins yo' bet Miss Conny, they is, and yo' better get to eating them, they is turning cold from neglect, all they needs is your sweet lips a tastin' them to make them grow hot again. William', you go and attend to yo' horse."

William,-

(Paying no attention to Susie) "Miss Constance! I got a very particular message to deliver as soon as you got time to listen, - Dick Green is home from the war. You know he was Paul Pomeroy's batman away over there in France. He's home now and has brought a message for yo' from France. (and going close to Constance) and he has brought a present for yo'."

Constance,-  
wa

"Dick Green! Dear Old Dick! Uncle Eddie told me there was no holding him to the pen when the war broke out and when he heard the cavalry brigade was going ungovernable, 'Let me out of here, whose to take care of Horse Pomeroy's horse, (he said) I'll come back after the war is over if I'm alive and go back in if you want me to but give me this one chance to prove my soul is white even if my body is black( he said).

They let him out and off he went to the front with the first contingent. Do you hear that Noreen, an old gray negro, (excuse me William) off to the war the first to go and among the last to return and listen that's not the end of it. He has brought that horse home and they both have decorations, - HOOAH! That's one of the things we are proud of in this old town and we have two V.C.'s besides."

Noreen,-

(Incredulously) "Out of the Penn, do you mean the Penetentiary, Constance? Is that what you said?"

Constance,-

"Yes, that is what I said. He got in there by mistake, instead of the other fellow. I've known Dick all my life haven't I Grandmother. Why he used to be the cook on the Nancy Jane and when I was a little girl we used to go up the lakes every summer and until I got too big my annual amusement was to rise up and down on his dumb waiter from the pantry to the kitchen.

He's a good friend of our family, isn't he Grandmother? Please give us another cup of tea and don't sham it this time. Susie, come and tell our fortunes like a good girl. - (and Constance says to herself) Back from the war with news from Paul. What did you say William? (She takes William aside)

Susie, (over her shoulder) Please tell Margaret's fortune first. She is so temperamental, she cannot wait."

Susie, -

(Taking up Margaret's cup and studying it) "I see here a very fair pussion with a golden head and something very heavy hanging over it."



Boreen, -

"Susie, you are a witch, that's the Prince with the golden head. The Prince of Wales and that's the crown of England, he's threatened with, that's hanging heavy, heavy over his golden head. He danced and danced with Margaret and ever since her temperature has either been sub-normal or over 100. I tell you it has been pretty hard on all her friends. Constance has brought her up here to be cured of the Prince."

Margaret:-

"I don't want to be cured!" He is just a dear boy. He told me he wished he was a cowboy. He wants to have fun like other boys and he's got to be a King. I'd like to know who would like to be a King these days. They are all getting their head's knocked off."

Susie,-

"Miss Margaret, I see her a long, long hill to climb, a long, long, hill. Let me look at yo' hand, honey. Here! love, Here's ambition, your heart will lead but my yo' is fond of luxury and an easy time and instead of an easy time yo' has a long, long hill to climb."

Constance, -

"Nonsense, Susie, you will scare her to death. That long long hill is the toboggan slide. I heard James call this minute ( and she answers it) William, open the door for the boys now for out toboggan togs. ( The boys James and Ken are ushered in. They are very wholesome to look at, very shy and undoubtedly are not city bred.)

Constance,-

"Hello, Jamie! Well, Ken! How you have grown. I tell you it is grand to see two real boys again. These are my two friends Margaret and Boreen. Let me introduce Mr. Kenneth Craig and Mr. Jamie Buchanan, Miss Margaret Pentecost and Miss Boreen Robertson. ( The boys bow and stand in awkward silence until Mrs. Hawthorne calls them and with her they are at ease)

Mrs. Hawthorne,-

"Jamie, Thank your mother for her kind invitation. I am so glad the children will begin their holiday in this happy way ( the girls in the meantime are undoing a bundle and pulling out sweaters, caps, mittens. Priscilla comes in with an armful of more practical looking woollens from the chest upstairs. In the struggle a Quija Board rolls out on the floor with a clatter)

William,-

"Fo' de Lawd's sake, what's dat, Miss Constance?"

Constance, -

"Oh, William, that's a Quija Board. Margaret must have put it in. I don't know what Grandmother will think of it but William, they say it tells you everything about the dead, brings back messages and everything like that."

William, -

(,looking scared) "I've seed the picture of that in Eaton's Catalogue. Brings back messages from the dead- does it? I to tell you there is a heap of messages I'd like to get from my loved ones whats passed over the river, but to-day I'd rather from the living. But - Still - I've been hearing about Sir Oliver Lodge, - and, the twentieth plane, and the angel at Mons, and the Three Horsemen and the Choir invisible



William, continues, "I've been hearing a lot of things lately and I like to be up to date on this spirit business like the mistresses. She gets wonderful messages from the dead. I think she she'll walk with God. You know she believes all our beloved dead is our guardian and ministering angels and and she says 'When we need messages, love will find a way love never dies.' She doesn't believe in the things folks is doin' these days. Look at her now. I specks she is telling Jamie about our brin' new calf."

Constance, - "OH! William, has Daisy got a calf?"

William, - "Of course, she has and that was to surprise you when you went hunting for fresh eggs in the sawn in' but I am so excited over this fool board I blabbed it out."  
(Constance goes over to her Grandmother)

Constance, - "Grandmother, William tells me we have a brin' new calf and what else, dear? You are such a set Grandmother you won't be cross with you. Margaret has brought her Ouija Board. They have such fun with it. You won't mind our letting William try it will you dear?"

Mrs. Hawthorne, - "No! Constance, if you only have fun but look at William's face, now. He is so much a child with the imagination of a child and very superstitious (Just then William says)

William, - "Yes, Miss, I would like to get a message from some of our loved ones that have gone before. I would like to ask Marse Hawthorne if all his family are well?"

Margaret, - "Sit down, William and place your hands here. Now go ahead Ask for Mrs. Hawthorne."

William, - "Marse Hawthorne, is yo' dere?"

Margaret, - "Yes, it - says - yes!"

William, - "Is --- yo' ----- she' - --- yo' is dere Marse Hawthorne?"

Margaret, - "Yes, it says - - says yes."

Susie, - (Who has been watching the proceedings in unfeigned terror)  
"Fo' de Lawd's sake, look how his hands go. Is you she' Miss Margaret dat Marse Hawthorne are dere?"

Margaret, - "Yes --- it ---- says----- yes."

William, - "Marse Hawthorne is all yo' fambly well?"

Margaret, - "Yes--- it---- says-- - yes."

William, - "I'se glad to hear dat, cause all day Mrs. Hawthorne, she getting messages and I'se kin' of feel'ng myself that something was wrong. Fo' de Lawd's sake, I feel mighty queer."



Margaret,- "Is there anyone else you would like to speak to, William?"

William, - "Indeed, there is Miss Margaret, ever since McCutcheons' niggah tale me dat dey won de war. He comes from New York, I'see been bothered like. I would like to ask Marse Lincoln. He would tell de trufe, who won de war?"

Margaret,- "All right, William ake to speak to Mr. Abraham Lincoln."

William, - "I like to do dat. Marse Lincoln. I like to speak to Marse Lincoln."

Margaret,- "That's right, William."

William, "Is yo' dere. Marse Lincoln?"

Margaret,- "Yes.--- it--- says--- yes."

William, "Marse Linco n, who won de war?"

Kenneth, (He has been listening, excitedly exclaims, "Oh, let me try?"

Susie,- "I know who I want to speak to when I get the chance."

Horeen, - (Who has been visiting with Mrs. Hawthorne) "Who Susie?"

Susie, - "The Mistress knows (and Susie bursts out crying. This attracts the attention of Mrs. Hawthorne and she realizes what they are doing."

Mrs. Hawthorne,- "Susie, come over to me - Poor Child, - Poor deluded children."

William, (Now growing more and more excited his hands wandering all over the Ouija Board calls out in a loud voice) "Marse Lincoln, is yo' still dere. OH, Marse Lincoln. What yo' say. - WHO ---- WON ---- DE --- WAR? Zhat's dat I am spelling out. -

Margaret,- (Spelling slowly) W E / / / --- W O N - - - T H E - - - W A R.

William,- "Who is WE?"

Mrs. Hawthorne,- (In a quiet voice) "WE are the dead."

William,- (Jumping up from the table) "Fo' God's sake, who said dem words? Was dat you Miss Hawthorne, did you speak?"

Mrs. Hawthorne,- "Yes, William, I got the message for you William and I never thought of that before. because I have never believed the war was won but that is the truth - 'We are the dead' Yes they won the war. they died that we might live. I got the message another way than that. Put the Board away Kenneth."

William,- (Trembling with excitement) "Oh, Mis' Hawthorne, Mis' Hawthorne, I'see so excited ov r dat board. I wanted to talk to some of my loved ones."



Mrs. Hawthorne, - "There is no need to be excited, William, that bit of wood in the hands of its questioners is but a bit of moveable phenomena."

William, - "But, Mis' Hawthorne, think if we could talk to some of our loved ones over the river."

Mrs. Hawthorne, - "I believe we can William, 'Spirit with spirit can meet. Closer are they than breathing, nearer than hands or feet' Love finds a way if we can stand the message. Love would scorn to come back to its own through a board or a paid medium. When you are quiet enough to hear you will hear those spirit voices and love finds a way."

I have heard my children call to me when we were separated by land and sea. I have heard them still when they have passed over into the spirit land but their precious messages have not been brought to me by total strangers. Love has been the messenger. Love will find away. Now, children, tis time for your slide so off you go Jamie. Don't trust to the old slide to-day, the slides are rotting. You and Kenneth take care of my girls and may you all have a happy time. I will go with you to the door and must say Good-night, for I will go bye-bye before you get back. (She goes out with them.)

Frischilla, - (enters with Mrs. Hawthorne's slippers. Susie with the cloth for tea and William with a tray with blue dishes. Frischilla lays the slippers by the fire, then comes to table open the telegram and hands it to William. He puts on his spectacles and reads aloud, )

William, - "SAMUEL VERY ILL NO HOPE."

Marse Samuel very ill, no hope," How isn't that just what I asked that board, 'If all our family well?'"

Susie, - "Who is going to tell the Mistress?"

William, - "Nobody, she done knows. Lordy, how she do get the news before anybody else. No need to sho' her this she knows. Dat fool Board, - I ask it if all our family well?"

("Marse Samuel dangerously ill?")

Mrs. Hawthorne, - (re-enters lovingly getting some baby clothes which she carries in her arms.) "Look William, these are his little clothes. You remember the day he was born, the little lad came in time for his father to go and preach - You remember how you said when you came home from church, 'Marse Hawthorne he done preach a wonderful sermon this day about a little child shall lead dem. All day I have been thinking of that little one born so long ago. How long ago was it?'"

William, - "High on fifty years. Mis' Hawthorne."



Mrs. Hawthorne, - "The little one we made such dainty garments for, he must have been my first born because there did not seem to be time for the other ones they came so fast! All day I seem to hear him calling, all day I seem to feel his chubby hands about my face. - such hot little hands. All day I seem to feel a hot restless little body laid against my heart, close against my breast. That dear little child born so long ago.

Priscilla, "What was that baby's name, Auntie?"

Mrs. Hawthorne, "His name was Samuel."

William, - "Marso Samuel, was his name."

Mrs. Hawthorne, - "Yes, William, he has been in my arms all day. We will get some news in the morning till then I will just hold my baby in my arms. Do you remember him? You used to sing him to sleep. William, sing to him now."

William, (Goes on setting the table and hums very softly, 'Deep river, I am going to pass over Jordan, Deep river, etc'.)

Mrs. Hawthorne, - "Bring the book William, (William brings it and reverently places it on the table in front of his mistress' then he and Susie set in the chairs on either side of the window, Priscilla on the footstool at her feet and she reads in a lovely voice.) In my Father's house are many mansions, I go to prepare a place for you that where I am you may be also. (The rooms grow rosy then fade out to complete darkness.) (Curtain goes down.)





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